

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. - 2. (Cancelled)

3. (Currently Amended) The process according to Claim ~~[[2]]~~ 11, in which the hydroxyl value (OHV) of a fraction having a weight average molecular weight of 2000 or more, the saponification value (SV) thereof and the acid value (AV) thereof satisfying the following: $\text{OHV}/(\text{SV} - \text{AV} + \text{OHV})$ ranges from 0 to 0.3.

4. (Currently Amended) The process according to claim ~~[[2]]~~ 11, wherein the compound represented by the general formula (a) is an esterified reactant of a reaction product obtained by adding an alkylene oxide to glycerin, and a carboxylic acid.

5. - 8. (Cancelled)

9. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 11, wherein the esterification is carried out in the absence of a fat or oil.

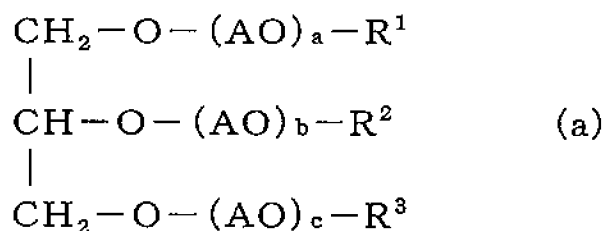
10. (Previously Presented) The process of claim 11, wherein the polyhydric alcohol is a trihydric alcohol.

11. (Currently Amended) A process for preparing a deinking agent, comprising the step of:

esterifying an alkylene oxide adduct to a polyhydric alcohol having 3-10 valences with a carboxylic acid, at a temperature of 100 °C to 260 °C; to yield a compound represented by the general formula ~~[[Y]]~~ (a) shown below and having a value of $\text{OHV}/(\text{SV} - \text{AV} + \text{OHV})$ in the range of from 0 to 0.3, wherein OHV represents the hydroxyl value, SV represents the saponification value, and AV represents the acid value;



wherein R is each independently a hydrogen atom or an acyl group having 1 to 24 carbon atoms, provided that at least one of plural R is an acyl group having 8 to 24 carbon atoms, A is an alkylene group having 2 to 4 carbon atoms, A may be the groups wherein the numbers of their carbon atoms are different, and m x n is a numerical number of from 45 to 1000, X is a polyhydric alcohol group, n is a number of 3 to 10 being equivalent the valence of X



wherein R¹ to R³ are each independently a hydrogen atom, or an acyl group having 1 to 24 carbon atoms provided that at least one of R¹ to R³ is an acyl group having 8 to 24 carbon atoms, A is an alkylene group having 2 to 4 carbon atoms, A may be the groups wherein the numbers of their carbon atoms are different, and a+b+c is a numerical number of from 330 to 1000.